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FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

ISSUED AT THE MAIDEN KOFI ANNAN PEACE AND SECURITY (KAPS) FORUM ON THE THEME
“PEACE OPERATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN AFRICA”
HELD IN ACCRA, GHANA FROM 4-5 SEPTEMBER, 2019

1. Preamble

The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC), in collaboration with the Governments of Ghana, Federal Republic of Germany and Norway, held a two-day forum at the Mövenpick Ambassador Hotel in Accra, Ghana from 4-5 September, 2019 on the theme: “Peace Operations in the Context of Violent Extremism in Africa”.

The forum was attended by over one hundred and fifty (150) high-level delegates including seven (7) former African Heads of State, diplomats and experts from diplomatic missions, governmental and intergovernmental organizations, including the African Union (AU) and its Regional Economic Communities, the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). Also among the delegates were security chiefs, and representatives from policy and research think tanks, development partners, peacekeeping missions and Training Centres of Excellence (TCEs) on peacekeeping and peacebuilding in Africa.

The Special Guest of Honour was His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana. The Forum was chaired by His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of UN Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS) and Goodwill Ambassador of the KA IPTC.

2. Development of the Communiqué

The final communiqué emerged from the outcomes of both the plenary and breakout discussions on the under listed topics:

- i. Peace operations and violent extremism: regional perspectives;
- ii. Mandates and international cooperation on countering violent extremism in peace operations;
- iii. Strategic and operational decision making: experiences of heads of mission in the context of violent extremism in Africa;

The seven (7) former African Heads of State who attended the forum were: His Excellency Pierre Buyoya, former President of Burundi, who is also the AU High Representative for Mali and Sahel (MISAHEL); Her Excellency Catherine Samba-Panza, former Head of State of the Central African Republic (CAR); His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, former President of the Republic of Ghana; His Excellency Prof. Amos Sawyer, former Head of State of Liberia; His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria; His Excellency Ernest Bai Koroma, former President of Sierra Leone; and His Excellency Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, former President of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Also in attendance were His Excellency Dr Mahamudu Bawumia, Vice President of the Republic of Ghana; Hon. Dominic Nitiwul, Minister for Defence of Ghana, who is also the Chairman of the KA IPTC Governing Board; Her Excellency Nane Annan, wife of the late Mr Kofi Annan and Board Member of Kofi Annan Foundation (KAF); His Excellency Christoph Retzlaff, German Ambassador to Ghana; Mr Øyvind Udland Johansen, Chargé d'affaires, Norwegian Embassy in Accra; and Air Vice Marshal Griffiths S. Evans, Commandant of the KA IPTC.

- iv. Dynamics within violent extremist organisations: recruitment, operations and sustenance;
- v. Women and youth in preventing and countering violent extremism;
- vi. Peacebuilding and stabilization in societies affected by violent extremism;
- vii. The role of the media in preventing and countering violent extremism;
- viii. Protection of civilians and peacekeepers in the context of countering violent extremism;
- ix. Gender-based violence, human rights and justice issues in the context of countering violent extremism;
- x. The role of civil society in mitigating violent extremism; and
- xi. Displacement and humanitarian challenges in the context of violent extremism.

3. The Communiqué

At the end of deliberations, the delegates made the following observations and recommendations:

3.1 Context

- 3.1.1 Violent extremism is embedded in structural violence, regional and global security complexes, and weak state capacity;
- 3.1.2 Violent extremist groups are shrinking the space for consent-based peace operations and rendering current peacekeeping principles obsolete; this is necessitating new doctrines that inform mechanisms and approaches to countering violent extremism;
- 3.1.3 Multiple narratives and logics underpin the growing diversity and spread of violent extremism; this should be analysed and understood from a structural perspective in order to design responsive interventions.

3.2 Recommendations

- 3.2.1 Build state capacity and legitimacy by upholding the rule of law, human rights and democracy in order to win the hearts, minds and confidence of populations;
- 3.2.2 Emphasise the primacy of prevention in order to minimise and obviate the need for military interventions in violent extremism;
- 3.2.3 Strengthen synergies between formal and informal governance mechanisms and frameworks in preventing and countering violent extremism;
- 3.2.4 Recognise the growing salience of non-state contexts - both as sources of violent extremism and resilience;
- 3.2.5 Encourage greater participation and inclusiveness of civil society organisations, communities and the media in preventing and countering violent extremism;
- 3.2.6 Develop alternative narratives that dissuade potential recruits from joining violent extremist groups using both traditional and new media;
- 3.2.7 Recognise women as survivors, perpetrators, as well as significant agents of change on issues relating to violent extremism;
- 3.2.8 Prioritise the role of the youth in preventing and countering violent extremism through genuine representation and targeting for their innovative ideas and strategies;
- 3.2.9 Prioritise community involvement in de-radicalization and reintegration of former violent extremist elements;
- 3.2.10 There is need for the ratification and domestication of relevant instruments that facilitate humanitarian assistance to enhance context-specific and need-based responses.
- 3.2.11 Peacekeeping mandates should reflect the asymmetric threats in operational theatres to ensure the effective protection of civilians and peacekeepers;
- 3.2.12 Current peacekeeping principles, doctrines, and architectures, including the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), are not in sync with current security threats and should therefore be reviewed;
- 3.2.13 Strengthen global-regional cooperation in peace operations by supporting the growing role of regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter;
- 3.2.14 “Coalition of the Willing” arrangements are more adaptable to contexts of violent extremism, and should be considered in ongoing discourses under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter;

WHEREUPON, We the under listed, Commandant of KA IPTC, and Chairperson of the maiden KAPS Forum respectively append our signatures to this Communiqué on the date below:

Issued in Accra on Thursday, 5 September, 2019.

Signature.....

AIR VICE MARSHAL GRIFFITHS S. EVANS,
Commandant of the Kofi Annan International
Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC),
and Host of the Maiden KAPS Forum.

Signature.....

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. MOHAMED IBN CHAMBAS,
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and Head of UN Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS),
Goodwill Ambassador of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC)
and Chairperson of the maiden KAPS Forum.